

In a recent memorandum the President directed the heads of all Federal departments and agencies to work aggressively and creatively to provide maximum employment opportunities for women in the Federal career service. We have been asked to develop, within merit principles innovative programs to recruit and hire qualified women and to be sure they have the opportunity for satisfying career development.

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As you may be aware, the Agency ~~has historically~~ maintained an active recruitment program with personnel recruiters located in selected cities throughout the country. This capability has enabled us to respond quickly to changing recruitment requirements. For example, during the period FY 1974 through FY 1976, the number of female professional and technical employees hired by the Agency averaged about 17%. In 1977, 20% of the professional and technical employees hired were female. Our current personnel requirements are very selective, focus on the college campus, and emphasize the scientific and technical disciplines. A recent analysis shows that slightly more than 20% of the students majoring in basic disciplines of interest to the Agency are female; thus, our recruitment and hiring efforts appear to be moving in the right direction.

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I am pleased that the percentage of female professional and technical employees in Grades GS-12 through GS-14, the feeder group to executive positions, has increased from 8.4% in 1967 to 10.7% in 1977. Another hopeful sign of progress is that women in executive positions have increased from .8% in 1969 to 2.2% in 1977 (GS-15 through GS-18). However, much remains to be done in providing challenging career opportunities for our female employees, and I have urged senior management to remain personally involved in advancing the careers of our deserving women.

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